

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO. [REDACTED]

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY

Hungary

DATE DISTR. 29 Mar 1952

SUBJECT

People's Attitude/Living Conditions/New
Construction/ Medical Facilities/Training
of Youth and Labor Groups

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NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)SUPPLEMENT TO
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1. On the surface, there was no apparent dissatisfaction among the Hungarian people [REDACTED] with life under the present regime. They appeared resigned to their present way of life, and did not discuss their plight for fear of recriminations. Those above the age of 25 are not blind to what is going on and swallow the Communist propaganda line with a grain of salt; among those there is little animosity towards the US and the Western World. The younger generation, however, is completely lost to the Communist doctrine, having been indoctrinated in its ideologies since birth. It is this youth element that spits on US cars and evidences its distaste for democracy in other juvenile ways. Dissatisfaction can, however, be measured by the numerous names published daily of those who have opposed the State in some manner, or who have been reported for failure to comply with the law. Predominant among these are the peasants and farmers who have been forced to work in the cities, or who are required to surrender portions of their crops to the State. Collective farms also evidence this dissatisfaction through failure to produce their assigned quotas. If there is ever an uprising of any kind in Hungary, [REDACTED] it will result among this latter class. Assigning of specific jobs to people, regardless of their desire to be so employed, is the major bone of contention among the Hungarian people; the government tries to glamorize employment in mines and coal fields to teen-agers, since it is impossible to interest older people in this work. These youths are frequently listed among those reported for leaving their jobs without the State's permission, as they soon find working conditions in the mines impossible. Once reported, it is difficult to find other employment. 25X1X
2. Although never proven, there was evidence of sabotage from time to time which further bore out an underlying feeling of dissatisfaction. In mid-1951, there was one serious train wreck on the main Budapest-Vienna line, approximately 60 kilometers outside Budapest, and another near Lake Balaton. Neither of these wrecks was publicized or mentioned in the press, indicating that the cause may have been sabotage which the authorities wished to withhold from the public.

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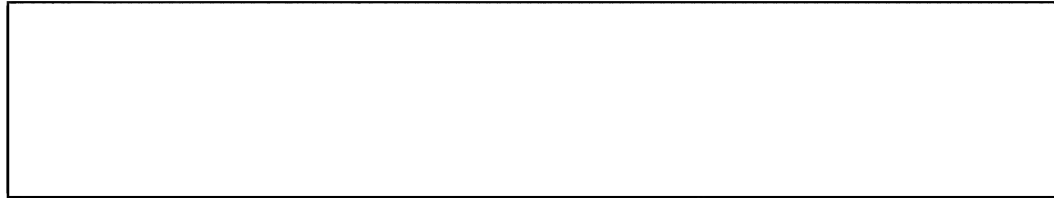
[REDACTED] "If the US ever invades Hungary, I shall do everything in my power to cooperate." [REDACTED] was a state

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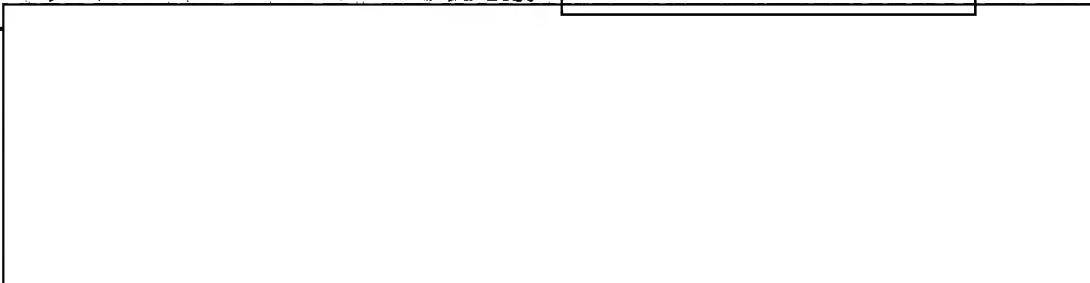
Standard of living in Budapest had improved considerably [redacted] Electric power, 110-220 volts, was adequate, but the slightest storm would often darken whole areas; lights would often dim during an evening in homes and public buildings. Heating was poor, due to a shortage of coal, although every attempt was being made to increase production in the mines. Food was rationed, with the exception of fish, poultry and certain vegetables, but there did not appear to be any severe shortages; people were in the habit of queuing up for their rations as early as 4:30 AM, which the authorities were attempting to discourage since they felt it unsightly. Rubble left from World War II destruction had pretty well been cleared in Budapest; remodeling, rather than new construction, was the general practice. An exception to this was the site of the new Secret Police Headquarters, built on Margit Island in the Danube. A five-story building one city block square, its roof was flush with the bridge spanning the river, and for security reasons was ringed by a one-way street.

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5. Streets in Budapest were in good repair as were the main, two-lane paved highways leading to Vienna and other major cities. Heavy snowfalls practically stopped all traffic, however, due to lack of snow-removal equipment. This often prevented food shipments from Vienna to Budapest, as well as gasoline, which is being trucked now more than river transported; in this connection, the major drawback is a lack of qualified truck drivers. River traffic was heavy at all times, and becoming heavier. The entire Danube waterway was being improved and dredged to accommodate this increasing load, with new dock and storage facilities springing up wherever available space permitted. Also, an effort was being made to convert all railroads to electricity, and all railroad and streetcar tracks to the same gauge.
6. Soviet vehicles seen most predominantly in the streets of Budapest were the two and one-half ton utility trucks and the Pobéjea passenger car. High Soviet officials generally rode in the Zis automobile, similar to the 1942 Packard, while lesser officials and Hungarian government workers generally rode in US manufactured automobiles. There were generally Soviet MIGs in the air during the day, as well as Soviet twin-engine transports similar to our DC3s which made frequent, scheduled hops between Hungary and the USSR. We seldom heard aircraft overhead at night.
7. Under the socialized-type medical system, it was very hard for the average citizen to obtain adequate medical treatment. Although there was no shortage of doctors, their fields were highly specialized, and no doctor was permitted to treat a patient other than his specialty allowed. A popular version to this system was the case of a man who, after being bitten by a mad dog, visited six doctors before he could find one to treat him for rabies.

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8. Groups of craftsmen from industry were being constantly sent to the USSR for periods of training, again in the interest of standardizing Hungarian and Soviet techniques. Soviet advisors were present in almost every industry, large and small alike. Factory workers were being trained in close-order drill during their off hours, both men and women, and there was hardly an industry that did not have its own rifle club that engaged in regular target practices.
9. Although not actually forced to do so, almost every child from the age of eight up was "induced" to join the Young Pioneers. These were constantly exposed to the Communist ideology in their group play and in summer camps; from the Young Pioneers, they were graduated into Freedom Fighters, whose marching formations were a familiar sight in the city and the countryside.

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